

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 33889 160902Z
ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 PRS-01 PA-01 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 /020 W
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P R 160820Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI
AMCONSUL SONGKHLA
AMCONSUL UDORN
SECSTATE WASHDC 7270

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USIAC

FOR IEA AND ICS/D; CINCPAC FOR USIA ADVISOR; CHIANG MAI
AND UDORN FOR BRANCH PAO; STATE FOR CU/EA

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS -- DECEMBER 10-16, 1976

MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

1. FRONT-PAGE ITEMS: PRIME MINISTER THANIN KRAWIXIEN'S TRIP TO INDONESIA AND THE CROWN PRINCE'S VISIT TO IRAN WERE HEAVILY COVERED THIS WEEK. INTERIOR MINISTER SAMAK SUNTHORNWET'S ALLEGATION THAT VIETNAM PLANS TO INVADE THAILAND ON FEBRUARY 15 MADE NEWS AND PRODUCED COMMENT, PARTICULARLY AFTER DEFENSE MINISTER SANGAT CHALORYU SAID HE KNEW NOTHING OF THE PLOT. SOME PAPERS SAID THEY KNEW ALL ALONG THAT HANOI HAS DESIGNS ON THAILAND, WHILE CONSERVATIVE SIAM RATH CHIDED SAMAK FOR HIS REMARKS, SAYING HE QTE LACKS A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD THE CABINET. UNQTE

2. A NEW TREND: THE SIAM RATH EEDITORIAL EXEMPLIFIES GROWING JOURNALISTIC BOLDNESS BY SOME NEWSPAPERS COMPARED TO TIMIDITY IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE OCTOBER 6 COUP. WHILE GOVERNMENT MINISTERS, PARTICULARLY SAMAK, CONTINUE TO CRITICIZE THE PRESS, THE PRESS IS HITTING BACK (ALTHOUGH PULLING ITS PUNCHES).

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RESPONDING TO SAMAK'S DECEMBER 12 TELEVISED ATTACK ON THE PRESS,

RIGHTEST TAWAN SIAM EDITORIALIZED, QTE WE ARE OF THE VIEW
THAT ANY GOVERNMENT THAT IS UNTOUCHABLE BY PRESS COMMENT DOES NOT
CHERISH THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT UNQTE

3. PUEY ATTACKED: NEWSPAPERS AND THE ARMORED RADIO STATION,
WHICH PLAYED A LARGE ROLE IN INCITING THE POPULATION AGAINST LEFTIST
STUDENTS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE COUP, ATTACKED FORMER THAMMASAT
UNIVERSITY RECTOR PUEY UNGPHAKORN FOR GIVING A QTE DISTORTED
UNQTE ACCOUNT OF VIOLENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY ON THE DAY OF THE
COUP. IT WAS ALLEGED THAT PUEY'S ACCOUNT WAS CONTAINED IN A
NEWSPAPER DISTRIBUTED TO THAI STUDENTS IN THE U.S. A TAWAN SIAM
COLUMNIST CALLED PUEY'S ACTIONS QTE TRAITOROUS UNQTE.

4. VANCE APPOINTMENT: THAI PAPERS CONTINUED TO COMMENT FAVORABLY
ON THE DESIGNATION OF CYRUS VANCE AS NEXT SECRETARY OF STATE.

PROGRAM NOTES:

1. CARTER PLACEMENT: THE WALTER CRONKITE INTERVIEW WITH
PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER, CARRIED IN THE NOVEMBER 30 WIRELESS
FILE, WAS REPRODUCED (ALONG WITH COVER ARTWORK FROM THE IPS
PAMPHLET ON CARTER) IN THE DECEMBER 5 ISSUE OF THE ENGLISH-
LANGUAGE NATION REVIEW. FAST DISTRIBUTION BY SPECIAL MESSENGER
OF THE DECEMBER 14 WIRELESS FILE PROFILE ON TREASURY SECRETARY-
DESIGNATE BLUMENTHAL RESULTED IN PLACEMENT ON THE OP-ED PAGE OF
THE DECEMBER 16 BANGKOK POST.

2. USIA BICENTENNIAL FILMS: THE USIA BICENTENNIAL GRANT FILMS,
MADE BY STUDENT FILM-MAKERS, WERE SHOWN TO AN AUDIENCE OF 70
TEACHERS AND STUDENTS FROM CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY'S FACULTIES
OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION.

3. LIBRARY TRENDS: CURFEW AND GENERAL UNREST IN OCTOBER HAD
AN EXPECTED IMPACT ON USE OF THE BNC LIBRARY. CIRCULATION WAS
ABOUT TWENTY PERCENT BELOW NORMAL, AND ATTENDANCE WAS OFF FIFTY
PERCENT. ANALYSIS OF STATISTICS INDICATES THAT CASUAL VISITORS
(MOSTLY BNC STUDENTS) STAYED AWAY FROM THE LIBRARY, BUT USERS
WHO NEEDED INFORMATION APPEARED AS USUAL.

4. THAI LIBRARY ASSOCIATION: AS A PART OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
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THE THAI LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, THE AUA LIBRARY HOSTED A LECTURE
BY VIOLA JAMES, FORMERLY WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
LIBRARY SCHOOL, ON THE TOPIC OF QTE ONE SCHOOL MEDIA
CENTER UNQTE, ON DECEMBER 16. ABOUT TWO HUNDRED
LIBRARIANS ATTENDED, MANY OF WHOM TOURED THE LIBRARY AFTER
THE LECTURE.
MCGINLEY

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